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## ARCHAEOLOGY IN ITALY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO PHILOLOGY

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The harmony and mutual respect that now mark the relations of archaeologists and philologists have not always obtained. There was a time when certain groups of philologists were affected by a vague distrust of the excavator and all his works. He was, they said, in almost every case a man who had started on the career of a philologist, but being driven to the distressing conclusion that a head was necessary in philology, he took to his legs and became an archaeologist. And just as the professor of medicine sometimes indicates his attitude toward his colleague the surgeon, by saying "Anyone can cut," so the philologist, venting on the luckless archaeologist that spleen which philological erudition tends to secrete, exclaims "Anyone can dig," forgetting in his crabbed irritation that not everyone can dig in the right place or in the right way. But this distrust of the archaeologist with his excavations, his museum collections, and his stereopticon has passed away, and more than one professor of literature and language, brought up on philology of the most arid type, has shown symptoms of a hankering after the lantern-slide and other meretricious methods of the archaeologist.

At no time, however, has the student of language failed to recognize the immediate bearing upon his own work of many of the products of the archaeologist's spade, and it is the purpose of this paper to sketch the contribution which archaeological research in Italy has made to a better understanding, a more comprehensive view, and a more intelligent criticism of the language and literature of the peoples who in ancient times inhabited the peninsula.

In the case of some Italic cultures archaeology has furnished practically all the material available for linguistic investigation.

A conspicuous example is the Oscan-Umbrian group of dialects,<sup>1</sup> including not only Oscan and Umbrian, but also the minor dialects of Central Italy, such as the Paelignian, Marrucian, and Volscian. For Umbrian our chief source of information is the *Tabulae Iguvinae*, seven bronze tablets found in 1444 at Gubbio, the ancient Iguvium. In size they vary from 15 by 25 inches to 12 by 16. The first four tables and part of the fifth are in the Umbrian alphabet, while the Latin alphabet is used in the rest of the fifth and in the sixth and seventh. They were found in a subterranean chamber near the remains of a Roman theater. The very substantial character of their contribution to the study of Umbrian is indicated by the fact that the text they furnish amounts to approximately five thousand words.<sup>2</sup> They contain regulations pertaining to ceremonies performed by a priestly organization called the *Frater Atiēriur*, which Bücheler translates "Fratres Atiedii." Perhaps I can give a clearer idea of the contents by quoting Buck's<sup>3</sup> translation of a few sections. In *Va* 7 ff. we have the following: "Let him (that is the flamen) select the sacrificial victims, and when they are given over let him inspect them to see if they are to be accepted, and in case of a triple offering let him inspect them in the country to see if they are to be accepted." In another part of the same table we find a statement of the contributions to be made regularly by certain *gentes* to the "Fratres Atiedii." On other tables there are regulations referring to the purification of the Sacred Mount: e.g. "One shall not make a noise or interrupt the ceremonies until the augur returns. If there is a noise or anyone interrupts the ceremonies, it will make the sacrifice void."

I have given this account of the content of the tables in order to convey some idea of the nature of the document. Its importance for our knowledge of the religious institutions of central Italy is obvious. Just what period is covered is not certain. The lack of

<sup>1</sup> Buck, *A Grammar of Oscan and Umbrian*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> The most important commentaries on the tables are Bréal, *Les Tables Eugubines*, Paris, 1875; Bücheler, *Umbrica*, Bonn, 1883 (with a Latin translation); Conway in *The Italic Dialects*, 1897; and Buck in *A Grammar of Oscan and Umbrian*, Boston, 1904.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 301 ff.

definite chronological data is shown with sufficient clearness by the vagueness of Conway's remarks, who sets the upper limit of the tables written in the Umbrian alphabet as the fifth century B.C. and the lower as 90 B.C. Since "the Tuscan" name is cursed in VI *b* 53-60, it is assumed that Iguvium was, at the time that the curse was written, independent of the Etruscans, though in some fear of them. As regards the tablets written in the Latin alphabet there is less uncertainty. At any rate the alphabet found in them "might have been used at any time between 100 and 50 B.C. Double consonants are not used at all in V*b* 8-18, only occasionally in VI and VII *a*, and not universally even in VII *b*; in a Latin inscription this would point rather to the Gracchan than to the Sullan period."<sup>1</sup> Umbrian seems to have been spoken down to the time of the Social War. Through the material furnished by the tablets we have a fairly definite idea of the language: its phonology, inflection, word-formation, and syntax.

The Iguvinian tablets are not the only epigraphical source for Umbrian. Some of the "early Latin" inscriptions of Pisaurum show Umbrian influence. There is also archaeological material of another kind, i.e. coins. We have bronze coins of two Umbrian towns, Tudur and Iguvium. Of the coins of Tudur the earliest series begins about 320 B.C. On some of them the legend TVTEDE is retrograde. The coins (cast bronze) of Iguvium are modeled on the standard of those of Tudur. They are earlier than 268 B.C.<sup>2</sup>

Let us look at Umbrian studies from another point of view and see what sources we should have had if archaeological material had been wholly lacking. The muster would be very meager. There are, however, a few lexical notes. An interesting one occurs in Paulus' *Excerpts from Festus*,<sup>3</sup> and contains a reference to Plautus:

*ploti* appellantur, qui sunt planis pedibus. Unde et poeta Accius, quia UMBER Sarsinas erat, a pedum planitie initio *Plotus*, postea *Plautus* est dictus. Soleas quoque dimidiatas, quibus utebantur in venando, quo planius pedem ponerent, *semiplotia* appellabant.

<sup>1</sup> Conway, *op. cit.*, I, 406.

<sup>2</sup> See Head, *Historia Numorum*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>3</sup> Thewrewk de Ponor, p. 305.

There are one or two other notes in Festus and Pliny the Elder. In addition to these glosses we have many place-names and personal names from literary sources.<sup>1</sup> But even in the case of these, the most definite information frequently comes from inscriptions in which they also occur. Some of the names are found only in inscriptions, so that here again it is archaeological material that is our sole source.

I cannot conclude my remarks about the Umbrians without saying that even with the archaeological material the amount of our information is surprisingly limited. At one time it is probable that they occupied a very large block of central Italy, extending from the Mediterranean to the Adriatic. It was from them apparently that the Etruscans, on their arrival from Asia Minor, seized the country west of the Tiber and the Apennines; and probably we have innumerable pictorial representations of Umbrians in the wall paintings of Etruscan tombs. I refer to the pictures of the slaves, which differ so noticeably from those of their masters. The latter are of an oriental type, while the former are distinctly Italic. The conquest by the Etruscans drove the Umbrians to the region between the Apennines and the Adriatic. But part of that territory was subsequently taken from them when by the encroachments of Gauls and Romans they were shut off from the Adriatic. The Roman conquest of Umbria seems to have been practically complete in 299 B.C., when the colony of Narnia was founded.

The story of the Oscan dialect is similar. The great mass of material available for its study is derived from inscriptions. One of the most important of these is the Cippus Abellanus. When this was found in Avella in 1745, it was being used as a doorstep. In 1750 it was taken to the Episcopal Seminary in Nola, where it now is. It is cut on two sides of a block of limestone (6 ft., 5 in. in height, 1 ft. 8 in. in breadth). It contains the regulations pertaining to a temple of Hercules which was on the borders of the territory of the Campanian cities of Abella and Nola, and sets forth in precise terms just what the rights of each community were. It is carefully spelled, and by reason of its excellent

<sup>1</sup> Conway, *op. cit.*, I, 437 ff.

preservation has furnished indisputable evidence in regard to many grammatical forms. It is in the Oscan alphabet and its date is approximately 150 B.C.

Another important Oscan monument is the Tabula Bantina. This is a fragment of a bronze tablet found in 1793 near the site of Bantia on the borders of Apulia and Lucania, and now in the Naples Museum. It is 10 by 15 inches and probably contains about a sixth of the whole inscription. It is in the Latin alphabet. On the back is a fragment of a Latin inscription (*CIL* i. 197). The date of the Oscan inscription, according to Conway,<sup>1</sup> lies between 133 and 118 B.C. He assigns the same chronological limits to the Latin text. Buck<sup>2</sup> places the Latin inscription between 132 and 117 B.C., and the Oscan a little later—namely in the last quarter of the second century B.C. The relation between the two is not clear. The Oscan inscription contains a number of municipal regulations for the town of Bantia.

There are a great many other Oscan inscriptions. Pompeii has proved a specially fruitful site. In that town they have been found on public buildings, in private houses, and in many cases cut or painted on outside walls. Not many are earlier than 200 B.C. After 90 B.C. Oscan ceased to be used in official inscriptions, although there is no doubt that Oscan continued to be spoken in the first century of the Christian Era. Among the most interesting of the Oscan inscriptions of Pompeii are those belonging to the *eituns* group, so called because they all contain the Oscan word *eituns*. They are painted in rough red letters on the street walls of houses. They apparently date from the siege of Sulla, and contain directions to the soldiers of the army of the allies who were defending the city. According to some, *eituns* is a nominative, and if this is correct, the interpretation of one near the southwest corner of the House of the Faun is as follows: "This street leads between towers 10 and 11, where Titus Fisanus commands."<sup>3</sup> Buck and other scholars prefer to take *eituns* as an imperative = Latin *eunto*.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, I, 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup> Mau-Kelsey, *Pompeii, Its Life and Art*, p. 240.

From the site of Capua comes the well-known inscription containing the curse of Vibia, which is a good example of the possibilities of the Oscan language in detailed and systematic execration. It is on a lead plate about  $3 \times 8\frac{3}{4}$  inches and was found near a tomb. The author of the curse is Vibia; its object, Pacius Clovatus and his relatives. From Samnium we have the dedicatory inscription found at Agnone in 1848, a small bronze tablet (about  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  inches), now in the British Museum. It is an inventory of statues and altars belonging to the cult of some rural deities. I will pass over the other Oscan inscriptions, of which there are more than two hundred.

On all this material, due either to chance finds or, as in the case of the Pompeian graffiti, to systematic excavation, philology has battered. On it volumes have been written and will be written: grammars, commentaries, and journal articles. It has played an important part in all comparative work on the Latin language. The pages of Brugmann, Lindsay, Buck, Sommer, Stolz, and other scholars in the field of linguistics reveal its extensive and varied application. Both Oscan and Umbrian are essential to a thorough knowledge of Latin. Of the two Oscan is the more important. It lasted longer than Umbrian and probably had a literature. I say "probably" because the matter is one on which there has been decided difference of opinion. Duff<sup>1</sup> and others follow Mommsen in adopting the affirmative view, but it should be noticed that Schanz in his "Geschichte der römischen Litteratur" (Müller's *Handbuch*, p. 10) denies it. It is interesting also to note that while Umbria gave Plautus and Propertius to Roman literature, Ennius, Pacuvius, and Lucilius came from Oscan territory. On the relation of the dialects to Latin, Duff<sup>2</sup> remarks:

Varied flavor is given to a Latin passage if it is recognized to contain words derived from one of the dialects. A proper name, too, gains in significance if its provenance can be discovered. For example *Caesar*, the ending of which is probably Oscan. *Pompeius* and *Pontius* are Oscan equivalents of the Roman proper names *Quintus* and *Quinctius* and would originally mean "fifth son." *Nero* is Sabine for "man" or "manly," and is cognate with

<sup>1</sup> *A Literary History of Rome*, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

ἀνὴρ. To be enabled authoritatively to isolate Umbrian elements in Plautus and Oscan elements in Ennius would possess more than philological value, just as truly as proving the presence of typical Warwickshire words in the text of Shakespeare.

What gives the Italic dialects great significance is the part they played in the formation of the general Latin of Italy. Mohl, in accord with Sittl, strongly contends that the provincial Latin of Italy, i.e., the *rusticitas Latina*, modified by the words and pronunciation of such tribes as Oscans, Volscians, Hernicans, Paelignians, Marsians and Picentines, was the almost exclusive source of the vulgar Latin of the Empire, and therefore all-important for understanding the rise of the Romance languages. In this light, linguistic phenomena of the Italic dialects acquire a new attraction. Fresh point is given to Augustus' habit of using the genitive *domos*, when it turns out to be a bit of Volscian grammar brought by him from his native district of Velitrae. Oscan and Umbrian sounds or idioms become literally alive if they can be traced, not merely in the literature, but handed down through spoken Latin to modern languages.

The contribution of Etruscan archaeology must also be considered, for on innumerable sites in Tuscany systematic excavations have been carried on and more than six thousand inscriptions have been found. Not that one can boast overmuch of this achievement, because for the most part these inscriptions have proved but a baffling puzzle to students of language. Only a few hundred contain anything but proper names, and of these less than a dozen are of any considerable length. At present this corpus of Etruscan inscriptions is a hope rather than an asset. It is a locked storehouse, the key of which is not forthcoming. But it will, in all probability, be through archaeology that the key will be found, for the best chance lies in the discovery of a bilingual inscription long enough to be of real service. When that happens, the whole field of Etruscan linguistics will be thrown open to philological inquiry. Even as it is, such progress as has been made in the investigation of the Etruscan problem is due to archaeological discoveries. I refer in the first place to the Lemnian inscriptions, which go far toward proving that the race is of Asiatic provenance; and in the second place I cite Professor Jastrow's work—based largely on archaeological evidence—on the similarity between oriental and Etruscan liver lore.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also Carter, *The Religious Life of Ancient Rome*, p. 19.



From excavations on sites in Latium and Campania, especially Rome, Ostia, Praeneste, Herculaneum, and Pompeii, has come untold treasure for the philologist. From the archaic stele in the Forum we learn something of the shapes of letters used on Latin soil in early times and of the practice of boustrophedon writing, even if we get very little else from that hoary mystery. In the Praenestine fibula—*Manios med fhefhaked Numasioi*—we have not only an example of writing from right to left, but a series of forms which have made linguists' mouths water from the day of its discovery down to the present time. "Manius made me for Numerius" reads the inscription on the brooch, but Manius did not make it for Numerius only. He wrought more wisely than he knew and made it for all students of the Latin language. It is ubiquitous in linguistic treatises. Is it the spelling of the nominative suffix that is being discussed? Consult the Praenestine brooch. The form of the accusative of the personal pronoun? See the Praenestine brooch. Rhotacism and its *terminus post quem*? The Praenestine brooch. The formation of the perfect? The Praenestine brooch. With it alone one has a small but none the less very serviceable linguistic equipment. Used with that discretion and circumspection always advisable for scholars whose strong point is not linguistics, it will carry one far. It has the impressiveness of great antiquity, the attractiveness of the odd and bizarre, the glamor of the remote, and the odor of erudition.

Of equal fame is the Duenos inscription, without which the specialist in Latin forms would limp, stagger, and halt. By no means so old as the Praenestine fibula but of more considerable content, it has established itself in the very forefront of linguistic study. It is a staff and comforter and a very present help in trouble. It must be conceded indeed that we are not perfectly certain what it means, and that this is one of the numerous cases where archaeology has furnished material which philology has failed to interpret with any striking degree of finality. But it obviously means something, and the words are there and much can be done with words even if the context is not wholly intelligible. And by that odd destiny that rules the affairs of this world, what Duenos wrote as a curse against Manus has turned out to be one

of the greatest of blessings for all those whose mission it is to teach or write about the Latin language. A reference to it has a striking effectiveness: The mere words "the Duenos inscription" are enough. They carry with them some elusive aura of esoteric erudition; they connote unplumbed depths of epigraphical lore; they hint vaguely at a command of Latin that would enable one to chat with Camillus as easily as swap dicta with Cicero (and indeed most of us could do the one quite as well as the other); they suggest the mystic, the inscrutable, the unfathomable. No one knows what new theory as to the form or meaning of the inscription a day may bring forth, and it is a marvel that those who a few years ago sought to demonstrate that it was verse but failed owing to the trifling difficulty that it would not scan, have not in the present vogue of solvent rhythms and deliquescent prosody pounced upon the explanation that it is the earliest known example of free verse, clinching the argument by showing that whether read backward or forward, upward or downward, it is equally intelligible, equally rhythmical, and equally effective.

Many other inscriptions have been added to the treasures of the philologists. The Scipio epitaphs, the *Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus*, the *Monumentum Ancyranum*, and the tablets of the *Fratres Arvales* may be especially mentioned out of an almost endless list. From these we have learned among other things how Latin was spelled in the different periods. For the philologist can tell us how the Romans should have spelled, but the inscriptions found by the archaeologists show us how they did spell. Such a point also as the pronunciation of double consonants was finally cleared up by the study of inscriptions. I have in mind the investigation by Walter Dennison<sup>1</sup> of the division of syllables in epigraphical texts either by interpunctuation or between lines—a study based on the examination of eighty thousand examples.

In the discovery of literary works excavations in Italy have not been fruitful. Rome and Pompeii have yielded nothing that can be said to belong to this class. From Herculaneum on the other hand we have the papyrus rolls. Of these relatively few are Latin, the others being Greek and consisting for the most

<sup>1</sup> "Syllabification in Latin Inscriptions," *Class. Phil.*, I, 47-68.

part of the lucubrations of the third-rate Epicurean philosopher Philodemus, who lived in the age of Cicero. One of the Latin rolls contains a hexameter poem on the achievements of Mark Antony in Egypt. Yet, disappointing as the contents of the library are, they are a reminder of what a more systematic exploration of Herculaneum might yield. Anyone who has read Waldstein's<sup>1</sup> book on Herculaneum will recall the glowing picture which he painted. I would not indorse all his views in regard to the possibilities of the site. He showed a vast subterranean imagination; but it is not unreasonable to suppose that a good library lies hidden there—one of such size that it would fill many a gap in Greek and Roman literature. Copies of the old Latin dramatists, the lost books of Livy, or the rest of the *Satyricon* of Petronius might turn up.

But the most important contribution of archaeology to philology does not consist in its revealing new fields for investigation. It lies in furnishing material that supplements the statements of authors on a thousand and one details of the various phases of that life of which Roman literature is the most articulate expression. The interpretation of all those works or parts of works that deal with or incidentally refer to the material side of Roman society would be grievously inadequate if we did not have the confirmatory or corrective evidence of the monuments. For example, there are many details of stage management not clear to us, but the number of these would be infinitely greater if it were not for the remains of theaters at Pompeii, Herculaneum, and in other parts of the empire. To cite one instance, it is only when we remember the great width of a Roman stage that we can reconcile to our reason those numerous scenes in Roman comedy in which someone utters a soliloquy or two actors carry on a conversation not heard by other persons on the stage. Anyone who has ever produced a Latin play knows what a hideous problem this is when the stage is small, and how it requires the utmost ingenuity and the adoption of heroic measures to attain any effect of verisimilitude. How can one expect an audience to believe that the confidential slave, or the senex, or the parasite,

<sup>1</sup> Waldstein and Shoobridge, *Herculaneum Past, Present, and Future*, London, 1908.

or whoever it may be, when standing only ten or fifteen feet away, cannot either see or hear the adolescens who up-stage is roaring out his sorrows in a stentorian bellow the reverberations of which start tintinnabulations in the ears of the remotest auditor in the gallery and threaten the occupants of the orchestra chairs with permanent deafness?

But it is not only dramatic literature that depends upon archaeology for details of interpretation. Many other branches of the literary art stand in similar relation to it. Excavations in the Forum and Comitium have given us the background of Cicero's speeches, not in the vague generalities of imaginative description but in the substantial reality of concrete, brick, and stone. Here are the temples where he delivered some of his orations, here in all probability, at no great distance from the imperial rostra, are the remains of the rostra on which he had so often appeared. Here is the dungeon in which the Catilinarian conspirators completed their conjugation of *vivo*. Wherever, indeed, Roman writers touch on historical events, the relation to archaeology becomes a very close one. Not that the excavations have always led to such definite results as in the case of Cicero and the Forum. For while archaeological research in France has cleared up some of the problems of Caesar's battle-fields, in Italy it has not been equally successful in regard to the battle-fields of Livy's history. Here its function must be corrective, for it is evident that Livy's descriptions are not based on autopsy. But where the scene of Livy's narrative is in Rome or in neighboring towns of Latium, the topographical details established by the archaeologists, the monuments they have uncovered, and the sites they have identified form its most effective illustrative matter. The same statement holds true for Tacitus. His story shifts from palace to senate-house, from Forum to Subura, from the temples of the Capitoline to the porticoes of the Campus Martius. He takes us along the Flaminian Way to the cities of the north, and past the tombs and villas of the Via Appia to Campania and the isle of Capri. Everywhere the work of the archaeologist has thrown light on his text—has made more vivid even his graphic and highly colored narrative, even his, who was the greatest prose stylist who ever arose

on Italian soil. But in Tacitus' case the contact with archaeology has often struck me in still another way: I have never seen the portrait busts and statues of emperors and empresses in the various galleries of Rome without thinking of Tacitus' *Annals* and *Histories*, for of the manifold impressions made by the grim drama unfolded in those works none is deeper than that left by his masterly series of imperial character sketches. Surely his is a gallery of portraits too—one that we can enjoy all the more and appreciate with increased vividness after studying the examples of imperial portraiture with which archaeology has supplied us.

Other Latin writers show in varying degree the same kind of dependence upon the products of archaeological research. Authors like Vitruvius and Frontinus, dealing with such subjects as architecture and aqueducts, are more closely related to it than any I have mentioned. The criticism of their text, the interpretation of technical terms, and the analysis of whole passages in their writings frequently depend upon evidence furnished by the excavations. The monuments could dispense with Vitruvius more easily than Vitruvius with the monuments. Even in the case of writers whose works belong to more purely literary types and whose dependence upon archaeological material is very slight—I have in mind especially philosophers and certain classes of poets—incidental references to things that find their best and sometimes their only illustration from archaeology occur with great frequency. In pedestrian types like satire such allusions abound. To the details of costume alone there must be thousands, and many a passage in Latin writers would be unintelligible without the assistance furnished by the toga-statues and other pieces of a similar kind. Such descriptions of costume as have come down to us are almost hopeless. They were all written by men. What we do know with any degree of positiveness is that which we learn from statues, reliefs, and paintings.

But while emphasizing the importance of the relation between these two subjects, I should not like to give the impression that I am exaggerating the claims of archaeology or that my position is that of a special pleader. I am not an archaeologist, but so much of my work for many years has lain along the borders of archaeology

that I have a very vivid impression of the closeness of its relation to numerous forms of philological inquiry. Limitations must of course be recognized. A lyric poem celebrating a victory in a chariot race can be fully appreciated even if the reader is somewhat vague as to the shape of the linchpins. In such a case it is well to go slow on the linchpins. In clumsy hands antiquarian lore will wreck a class as quickly and irretrievably as a special knowledge of syntax. We must recognize also that there are limits to what the archaeologists may reasonably be expected to dig up. We can hardly hope that they will find the basket in which Romulus and Remus were exposed, the sieve in which the accused Vestal carried water, the coin that Caesar flipped on the bank of the Rubicon, or the imprint of Lesbia's kisses. Essences, quintessences, and abstracts are beyond the ken even of archaeology. To all things, as Lucretius tells us, nature has set an end, a limit, a deep-set boundary mark. It is essential that we should recognize this in studying the contribution of archaeology to philology and realize that in literary studies of the highest type archaeology can do little more than furnish the background and set the stage upon which philology must play the leading part.